



Extraordinary Education. Timeless Traditions. Inspired Lives.

## What to Expect: Second Grade at Denver JDS

**Tuning and strengthening foundational skills in preparation for entrance into intermediate elementary grades is a major focus of second grade. Students engage in learning connected to cause and effect and focus on their critical thinking and problem solving skills.**

### Literacy

By second grade, most students can read and write at a basic level, and students continue to tackle more and more texts in and out of the classroom as they work to become rapid and accurate readers. Second grade teachers put an emphasis on fluent reading (reading without stopping to figure out words) at each child's own level. Second graders become better story

writers as they learn to write basic sentences and short narratives about an event or a character. They become critical thinkers by learning to compare and contrast the same story written different authors or originating from different cultures. Second graders may also experiment with different voices, writing some stories from a personal viewpoint and others in the third person. They more frequently use the correct spelling of words that they know, and use punctuation more regularly. A highlight of the second grade literacy curriculum is the mid-year Poetry Slam. The second grade literacy program includes units focused on comic strips, persuasive writing, historical fiction, and fairy tales.

Our **Learning Resource Center** and **Gifted Learner Program** support Denver JDS teachers in challenging students across the academic spectrum and provide direct student support. Inside the classroom, flexible grouping and differentiation allows students to all be supported and encouraged to reach their potential. Additionally, through our **Focus on Growth Initiative**, teachers work with students to set individualized academic and social-emotional goals for the year, focusing on personal growth.

Denver JDS develops and fosters future-ready skills within our students to prepare them not only for today's world, but for the world of tomorrow. With an emphasis on creativity, communications, collaboration, critical thinking, and communities, we equip our students with the skills they need for success in any content area.

### Math

Our Math in Focus curriculum emphasizes mastery of basic mathematical concepts, number sense, mental math and problem solving. Mathematics concepts become more complex in second grade. Students can order, group numbers and work with numbers far greater than those they can physically count. They have more practice with skills and concepts introduced in first grade such as skip counting. They learn to add and subtract two-digit numbers and to understand the meaning of multiplication and division. Second graders also focus on building problem-solving skills and strategies; counting, comparing, and writing numbers to 1,000; adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing using bar models; measuring length, mass, and volume in metric units; telling time;

recognizing bills and coins; and classifying lines and surfaces. Second grade math units include "Number Sentences," "Volume" and "Estimation."

## Social Studies

In second grade, students broaden their knowledge of the world. Second graders learn about the people and places of their local communities and regions and compare them to other communities and regions. They may be given more responsibility to resolve conflicts with their classmates and are expected to have a deeper understanding of the importance of rules and their role in helping people get along. Our goal is to give students the tools they need to be upstanding members of their *kehillah* (community), ask questions, and participate in their communities to help make our world a better place for all people. Our curriculum looks at the different ways that people interact and live as good citizens. We integrate values that are part of our grade *middot* curriculum whenever possible and focus on four main areas of study: history, geography, economics and civics. Second grade units include “Community,” “Elections,” and “Location, Location, Location.”

## Science

Second grade science focuses on the scientific process of making observations, precisely describing observations, inferring from observations, asking scientific questions, generating hypotheses, developing strategies to test hypotheses, and reaching conclusions. Over the course of the year, students apply this process in units such as “Balance and Motion,” “Weather,” and by investigating the life cycle and needs of plants through hands-on learning in the Wabash Farmette at Denver JDS.

At Denver JDS, instructional and educational technology are a key means of extending and enriching teaching and learning. **Technology** is infused throughout every one of our classrooms as a vehicle for enhancing student learning.

## Judaic Studies

The second grade Judaic Studies program adds a new layer to students' previous studies. While learning about the holidays, students also explore the Hebrew calendar, recognizing the role of each holiday in that calendar and the associated customs. Torah study expands to involve both learning of *parshat hashavuah* (the portion that is traditionally read each week) and the more in-depth *Chumash* (bible) study, focusing on the narratives of creation, Noah, Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Esav, and Jacob and Rachel. In each unit, students focus on the universal and timeless lessons of the text and how to apply those lessons to their own lives. In *tefilah* (prayer), students focus on reading the text of the prayers and understanding the meaning of the words. The big celebration of second grade is the annual *Chagigat HaChumash* (a celebration where students receive their own *chumash*).

## Hebrew

Continuing their study of Hebrew language using the Tal Am curriculum, second grade students devote much time to acquiring the four basic literacy skills: reading, writing, speaking, and listening. The focus of the year is for students to see Hebrew as a language through which they can communicate with each other and with the world. By the end of the year, many students can read from a variety of Hebrew texts, including their *siddur* (prayerbook). They can also locate specific information within the text and respond to questions about the text both orally and in writing. Students read and write in Hebrew script and compose simple sentences, riddles, questions, and answers using grade-level vocabulary and proper grammar.

Our *Divrei Chaim* (Words to Live By) and *middot* (Jewish values) are lived everyday at Denver JDS, both inside and outside of the classroom. They are used as a basis of community building and character development across the curriculum.